

# Charles H. Sanderson

*"I want to have a creative mind,*

*to appreciate all phases of life,*

*not just paintings alone."*



1925–1993

**Born** March 6, 1925 at Hamilton  
in the middle of the Kansas  
Flint Hills, he grew up studying the distinctive patterns  
he would spend his life interpreting to us.

But not until after Army service in World War II  
did Charlie begin his deliberate movement toward his  
two loves — art and teaching.

He studied architecture at Kansas State University,  
then transferred to Emporia State University where he  
earned a BA in art education, and completed studying at  
Fort Hayes State, where he gained his master of fine arts  
degree. Then came teaching jobs in Altoona and Lyons,  
where he also coached the freshman basketball team.

“It was just a way to prove that I was human,” he  
said of the coaching job. “This world makes it difficult  
for **creative** people.”

But one person in Charlie’s world made it easy.  
He married Ruth Wachholz in 1952. They moved to  
Wichita from an El Dorado teaching job in 1959. And his  
artistry and reputation grew.

His daughter Charla found the following scrawled  
on two sheets of paper from his sketchpad. We don’t  
know for what or whom the words were written. Listen  
to the rhythm, the honesty, the directness in this simple  
revelation about complex artistry:

“The paintings are my feelings of Kansas. They  
are not copies of Kansas, but expressed through my

ability

to paint. I do not believe they are great examples of art, but they do depict my honest statement of Kansas. I don't like to paint 'pretty pictures,' but try to force the observer to think about the moods of Kansas. I would love to paint in the style of DaVinci, Pollack, Wyeth, Peak and others. I know my limitations to paint, but strive to improve. I've learned to appreciate all of the arts, which is important for every artist to grow within themselves."

The words reveal something more about Charlie — his humility. Originally, he had written this line: "I know my abilities to paint." But then he scratched out "abilities" and substituted "limitations."

He knew his limitations because he was constantly testing them, pushing them to the next challenge, the next blank canvas.

That's how he painted and taught all his adult life, forcing us to feel the moods and rhythms of Kansas and of life. He taught, but we had to listen.

What he said about **teaching** when he retired in 1985 applies as well to the painting he did until he died.

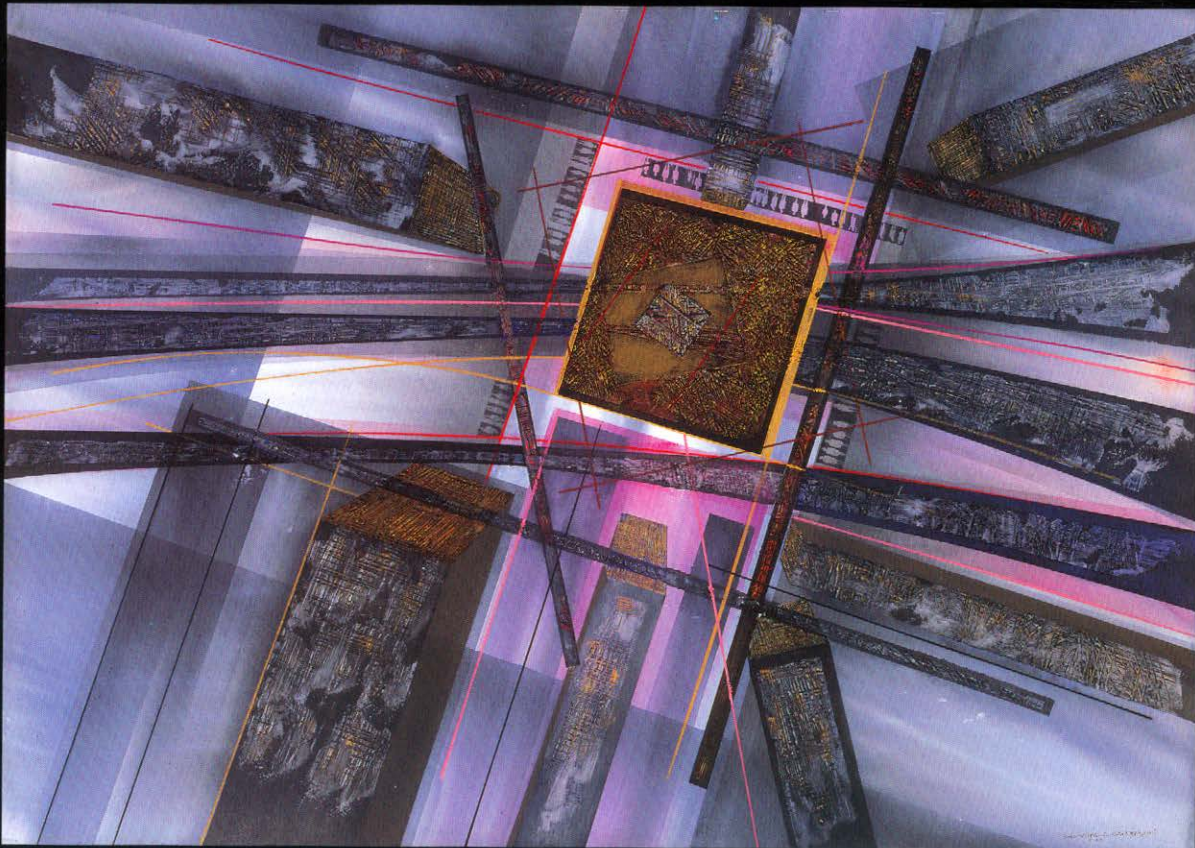
"I know there are some students I can't reach," he said. "Others, you just click with. They know what you're trying to get them to do.... I'm for creativity, and there have been a lot of things created in this room. There have been wild days and calm days. And days I didn't understand at all.

"It's gone by fast. Yes, I'm going to miss it."

He went by fast. And yes, we miss him.

Jon Roe





"My paintings are my **feelings**  
and interpretations of subject matter  
and visual experiences."

Wind *whispers to trees,*

*Clouds to grass, and in that*

*Instant, aeons pass.*

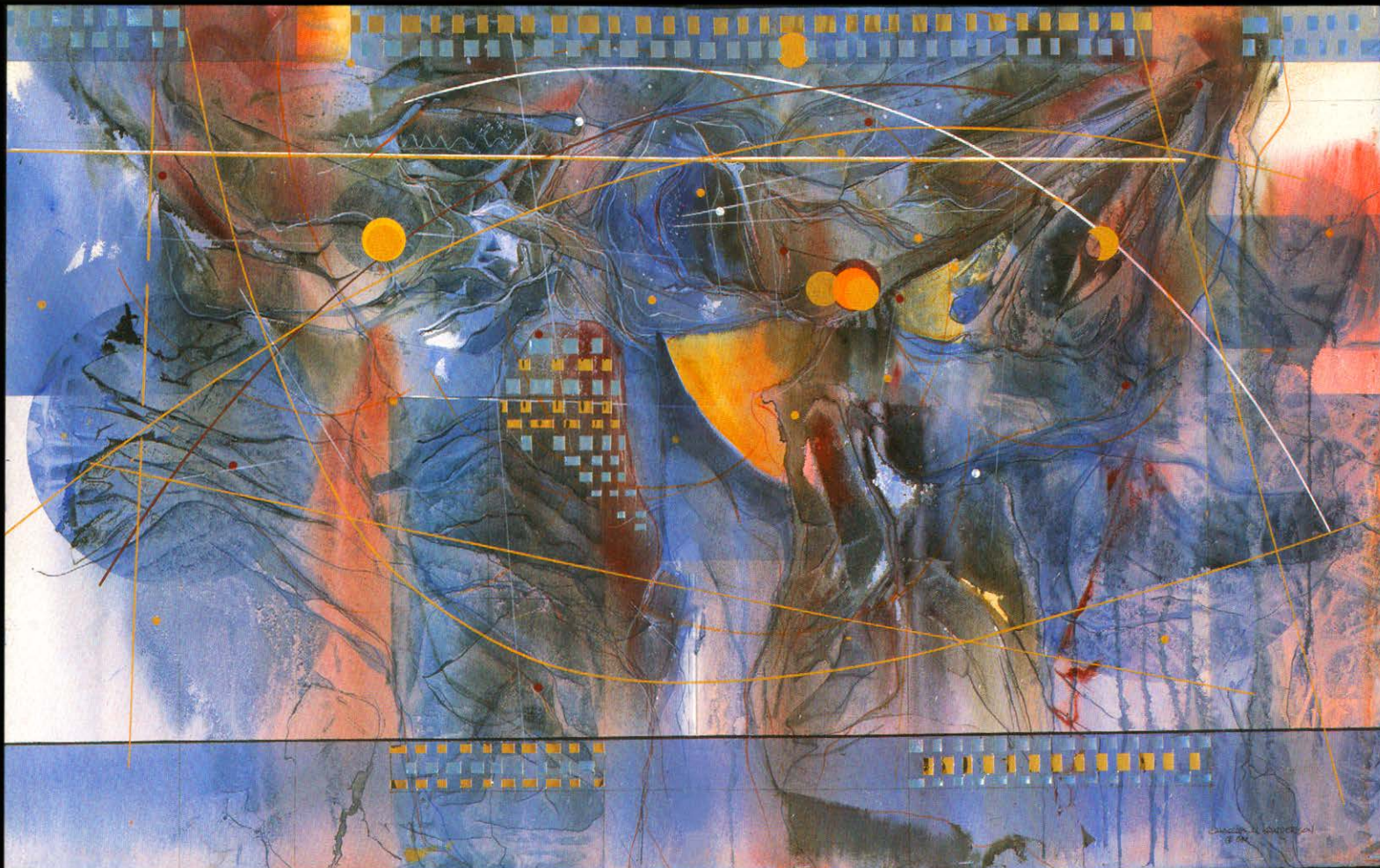




*Cumulus cluster,*

*Rises free, rolls over now*

*Toward eternity.*



*"I want the observer to think, to read new*

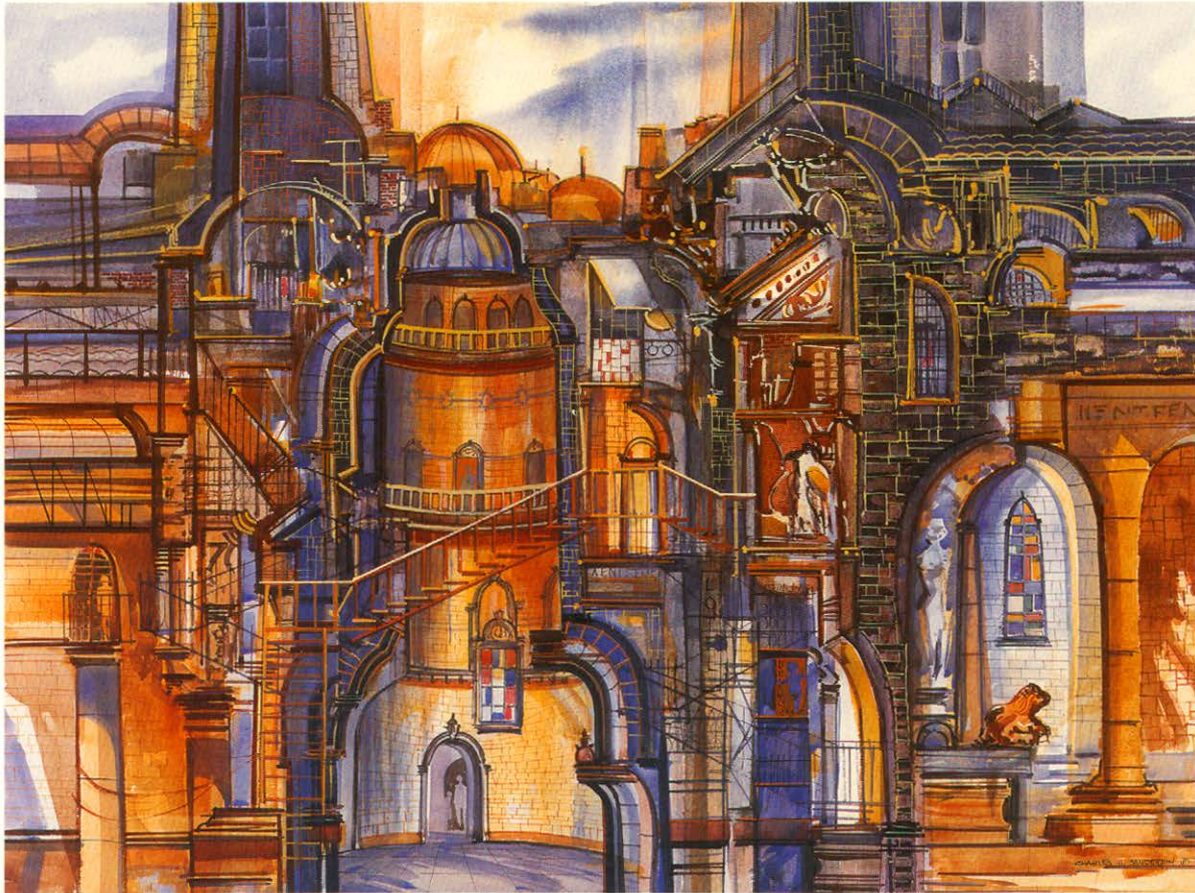
*ideas,*

*and enjoy a myriad of visual experiences in my work."*



*"The paintings are my feelings of* **Kansas.**

*They are not copies of Kansas, but expressed through my ability to paint."*



*Questioning mountains,*

*I receive always*

*The same answer...*

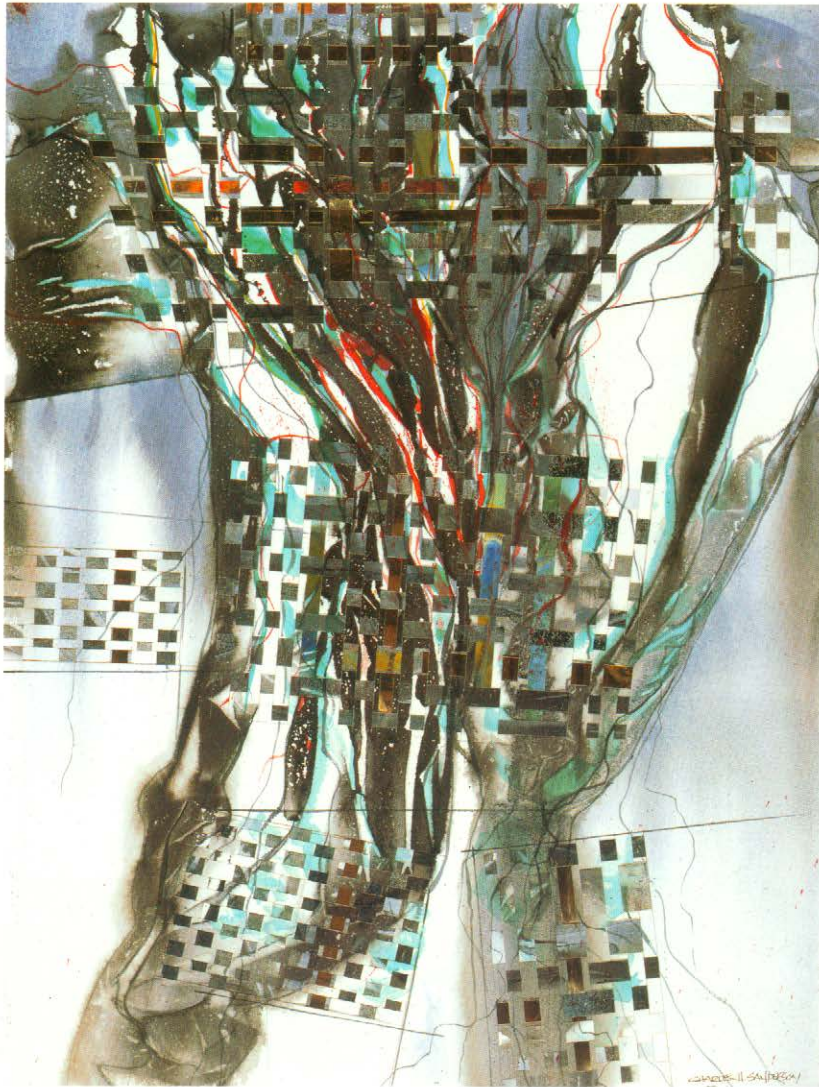
*Mystery is in the moment*

**Life**

*sliding down a snowbank.*







*"A spring in Kansas compares*

*to a watercolor in progress with*

*its directness of new*

**growth**

*as the artist's brush creates new*

*colors and stimulates new visions*

*and impressions of our state."*

# Acknowledgments

## P A G E 3

"PLAYFUL HEIGHTS"

Acrylic • 40" x 30"

Collection

Joel Sanderson

## P A G E 4

"FROM THE PRAIRIES  
TO THE MOUNTAINS"

Watercolor • 40" x 30"

Collection

Charla Sanderson

## P A G E 5

"TERRATERRESTRIAL"

Acrylic/Mylar • 50" x 35"

Collection

Jerry Rosen

## P A G E 7

"SPECTACLED SPECTATOR"

Watercolor • 40" x 30"

Collection

Hank and Deanna Bumgardner

## P A G E 8

"CONCAVATURE"

Watercolor • 30" x 40"

Collection

Joel Sanderson

## P A G E 9

"LIFE IS LIKE A WEAVING"

Watercolor/Mylar • 22" x 30"

Collection

Charla Sanderson

Poems from Jon Roe

pages 4,5,8.

Quotes from

Charlie H. Sanderson

Cover and pages 3, 6, 7, 9.

Exhibit Curator:

Novelene Ross

Exhibit Coordinator:

Charla Sanderson

This brochure has been  
partially underwritten by:

Larry and Anita Jones

Brochure Design:

Greteman Group





